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USIB-D-46. 4/28 ✓  
13 June 1969  
Special Limited Distribution

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

MEMORANDUM FOR USIB PRINCIPALS

*VP, AC, ED*  
*HL*

SUBJECT : Study of a Near-Real-Time Imagery Satellite System: Its Impact on Intelligence Production and Processes

- REFERENCES :
- a. USIB-D-46. 4/3 (COMIREX-D-13. 7/4) 5 January 1968, Limited Distribution
  - b. Memorandum for Holders of USIB-D-46. 4/3, 21 March 1969, Limited Distribution
  - c. USIB-D-46. 1/4, 6 June 1969, Limited Distribution

1. In restricted session at the special USIB meeting of 11 June, with the Director, National Reconnaissance Office, attending, the Chairman opened the discussion with a brief statement as to the reason for scheduling a USIB meeting on this subject at this time. Mr. Helms stressed that this meeting and Mr. Inlow's briefing were not intended to have an impact on the specific choice of which near-real-time readout system might be adopted or who would develop, pay for or operate such a system. He explained that the meeting was required because Deputy Secretary of Defense Packard had requested that a paper be prepared by 15 July on a  near-real-time system for EXCOM consideration. Mr. Helms stated that this deadline meant that USIB must be ready to consider and advise on a rational statement of intelligence requirements for such a system by early July.\* Thus,

\*Copies of Secretary Packard's memorandum of 16 May and Mr. Helms' reply of 5 June are attached hereto to provide background information for the members.

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Mr. Inlow's briefing was being presented for information at this time as a step toward developing the necessary USIB requirements.

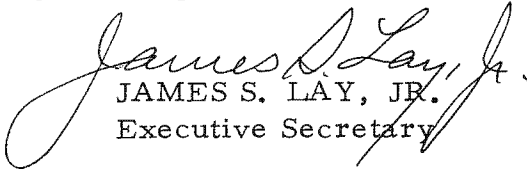
2. Before introducing Mr. Inlow, Mr. Helms noted that his briefing would summarize a study which CIA had just completed on this subject. Mr. Helms gave a copy of this study to Dr. McLucas with the request that NRO provide preliminary comments on it prior to its circulation to the USIB.

3. Following Mr. Inlow's presentation, Dr. McLucas commented that it was a most interesting presentation, adding that the most intriguing question was to what extent such a system when in use would augment or replace existing satellite systems. He said that if a near-real-time system were additive to present systems we would be in trouble because of costs. Therefore, it is important to identify the extent to which the cost of such a new system could be offset by reduction or termination of other satellite reconnaissance systems.

4. Admiral Harlfinger then asked Mr. Inlow to clarify points in his briefing regarding the handling of the flow of information from such a near-real-time system.

5. General McChristian commented on two particular points of interest to the Army. First, he suggested that study of this system tie in its potential uses by the Army for tactical intelligence needs on a near-real-time basis. Secondly, he questioned what the impact would be on the Army's large scale topographic mapping program, particularly if it meant a reduction in the future use of the 12" SI camera system. He noted that the Army has been and is making a substantial investment in its large scale mapping program which is dependent upon extensive future use of the 12" SI camera system.

6. The Board then noted the briefing and the DCI's request that NRO prepare preliminary comments on the CIA study on the subject, prior to the circulation of the study to the USIB and COMIREX for consideration in developing a statement of intelligence requirements by early July.

  
JAMES S. LAY, JR.  
Executive Secretary

Attachments

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YTHE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WashingtonMEMORANDUM FOR MR. HELMS  
DR. DuBRIDGE  
DR. McLUCASSUBJECT:  read-out

As a result of our recent conversations with Dr. Land, I believe we should consider what actions we should take now leading toward development of a  read-out system.

Accordingly, I propose that we prepare by July 15 a paper for EXCOM consideration that addresses:

1. the value of  near real-time read-out for indications, warning, crises, and day-to-day intelligence production;
2. the relative contribution to these intelligence needs of alternative performance in terms of area coverage, target frequency and resolution;
3. the status of technology and the effect of potential developments on our ability to provide alternative systems with near real-time read-out; and,
4. the value and cost of alternative  read-out systems and their effect on the total mix of satellite photography.

I have asked Herbert Benington of my staff to take the lead in preparation of such a paper working with the NRO, CIA and DoD staffs.

In the meantime, we have added  in FY 69 funds to the CIA technology program.

16 May 1969

signed

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DAVID PACKARD

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YMEMORANDUM FOR : The Honorable David Packard  
The Deputy Secretary of DefenseSUBJECT :  Readout

1. I have reviewed your proposal to prepare a paper for EXCOM consideration by 15 July on the subject of our recent conversations with Dr. Land. I would like to give you my views on how we should proceed in addressing the four areas you outlined.
2. With regard to the problem of establishing the intelligence requirements which would be served by a  readout system, I have had under way for several months a comprehensive study of the potential value of such a system for indications, warning, crises, and day-to-day intelligence production. The study, which will be completed shortly, follows up earlier USIB and NRO papers and is intended to provide the basis for an initial USIB statement to the NRO of requirements for such a system. I am satisfied on the basis of the work to date that an appropriately configured  imagery system would be of considerable value to intelligence, and I am confident that the completion of the present study and USIB review will confirm my present views. The USIB review and statement of requirements will be completed in early July.
3. On your second point, I feel that the questions of the relative contribution of area coverage, target frequency and resolution toward the satisfaction of requirements are interlocked with the requirements themselves, and I believe that these will be addressed satisfactorily in the USIB statement.
4. Inasmuch as the NRO has had a technology program under way in this field for several years, I assume that Dr. McLucas

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will be actively associated with the evaluation which you propose in your memorandum as the third step and that the extensive work and previous EXCOM reviews over the past several years will be used as a base.

5. With respect to your fourth point, I believe that until we have moved toward a more concrete definition of a [ ] system, it will be difficult to assign closely drawn value and cost trade-offs to alternative [ ] readout systems and their effect on the total mix of satellite photography.

6. I fully appreciate the need to move toward the attainment of a [ ] imagery system capability in a way which strikes an appropriate balance between urgency, engineering caution, and cost considerations. I believe a strong case has been made to proceed promptly with increased research and development and that this is the essential point on which EXCOM should focus at this time. I will be happy to make my findings and intermediate studies available to you as they are completed, pending final USIB action. Mr. Roland Inlow, who is the Chairman-designate of COMIREX, has been engaged in the requirements study, and I would encourage direct discussions and consultations between Mr. Benington and him in the interim.

signed  
Richard Helms  
Director

5 June 1969

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